



Office of the Iowa Secretary of State

FY 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

SERVICE | PARTICIPATION | INTEGRITY

Table of Contents

Message from the Secretary **3**

Voting & Elections Division **4**

Safe at Home Division **10**

Business Services Division **13**

Initiatives and Outreach Divisions **19**

Information Technology Division **34**

SECURING ELECTIONS, SUPPORTING IOWA BUSINESSES

Dear Iowans,

It has been an honor to serve another year as your Secretary of State. Across our three flagship divisions, elections, business services, and Safe at Home, our work directly impacts the lives of millions of Iowans. It's a duty that I take seriously, and as such, I strive to find ways to improve our services, so that Iowans can trust in our government systems and participate in our democratic process with pride.



For many years, Iowans have emphasized the importance of safe, fair, and secure elections for all eligible voters. We are proud to maintain Iowa's reputation as a top-ranking state in the nation for election administration, and we saw strong voter participation in the 2024 General Election. Maintaining a strong balance between election integrity and voter participation is not just a priority: it is the duty of my office. It is clear that our layered approach to election security is working: in the fall of 2024, 91% of respondents in the Iowa Poll reported confidence in Iowa election results.

Public education on voter registration and participation are also cornerstone initiatives for our office. Programs like the Carrie Chapman Catt Award provide young people with resources and tools to participate in Iowa elections as soon as they are eligible, and instill a lifelong sense of civic duty. Our new Veterans for Voting program provides similar resources to Iowa veterans, ensuring the brave men and women who fought for our nation can now exercise their right to vote with no barriers.

Iowa continues to thrive in civic engagement, and that same spirit of engagement and innovation is reflected in the success of Iowa's business community. We saw a growing number of new business formations in FY25, proving the American Dream is alive and well in Iowa. Our Business Services Division officially launched a new call center, open 24/7, to better serve Iowa businesses at any point in their entrepreneurial journey, day or night. Our Fast Track Filing system also serves Iowans 24/7, and 95% of new businesses are formed online using the system.

We are also steadfastly approaching a key milestone in the Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking program – we expect to welcome our 1,000th member to the program in early 2026. Our Safe at Home program provided access to confidential absentee voting for more than 150 voters, allowing participants to cast their ballot without fear of exposing their location.

I could not be prouder of the efforts of my team this year. It is an honor to serve the great state of Iowa, and I look forward to continuing to do so.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul D. Pate". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL D. PATE
Iowa Secretary of State

VOTING AND ELECTIONS DIVISION

PROTECTING IOWA'S ELECTIONS



VOTER REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION

BY THE NUMBERS

1,698,438

PARTICIPATING
VOTERS IN 2024
GENERAL ELECTION

75.7%

VOTER TURNOUT IN 2024
GENERAL ELECTION

2.1M

REGISTERED VOTERS AT
THE END OF FY25

104,945

NEW REGISTERED VOTERS

4,737

STUDENTS AGED
17 AND 18
REGISTERED TO
VOTE THROUGH
CARRIE CHAPMAN
CATT PROGRAM

239

STATE AND FEDERAL
CANDIDATES CERTIFIED
FOR THE 2024 GENERAL
ELECTION

ELECTION DIVISION

ELECTION INTEGRITY



DALLAS COUNTY POST ELECTION AUDIT, 2024 GENERAL ELECTION

Safe and secure elections statewide

In November 2024, voters across the state participated in the 2024 General Election. Conducting a safe and secure election on behalf of Iowa’s 2 million registered voters remained a key priority and top responsibility of the Iowa Secretary of State’s office. A layered approach remains the strongest strategy for election security, with each safeguard reinforcing voter confidence in Iowa.

As Iowa’s commissioner of elections, the Secretary of State implements multiple layers to protect the state’s election integrity, combining cutting-edge cybersecurity measures, equipment testing and certification, paper ballots, voter ID with bipartisan teams of poll workers, training, and partnerships with state, federal, and local agencies to maximize election security. Continuous monitoring of threats, ongoing security assessments, regular training and preparedness exercises, and proactive threat mitigation provide Iowans with the confidence that every vote is counted fairly and accurately.

One key threat to election integrity continues to evolve: the rise of misinformation. Positioning Iowa election officials as trusted sources of election information is vital to maintaining trust in Iowa elections and proactively combating inaccurate information. Consistent, proactive public information campaigns led by the Iowa Secretary of State and Iowa’s 99 county auditors provide an additional layer of security and strengthen trust in the electoral process.

Candidate and judges certified for the 2024 General Election

Each candidate for state and federal offices must file an affidavit of candidacy and nomination petitions or convention certificate with the Iowa Secretary of State’s office to be certified to appear on the ballot. In FY25, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office certified 239 candidates to appear on the ballot for the 2024 General Election. The office also certified 69 judges.

ELECTION DIVISION VOTER REGISTRATION

Statewide voter registration database upgrade

The Iowa Secretary of State continued its third-party vendor contract to maintain i-Voters, the statewide voter registration system, through FY25.

The office has also continued its partnership with Civix to develop a new software program that is, first and foremost, compliant with Iowa law, and is also more user-friendly than the previous database, which was in place for 20 years. The elections team spent dozens of hours a week in meetings with developers and in testing the software. Users have been and will continue testing and receiving detailed training for the official launch of the system in FY26. Throughout FY25, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office facilitated several in-person orientation and training sessions for county auditors related to the Civix voter registration system. These sessions have led to increased confidence in both the software’s performance and its acceptance by end-users.

Voter list and absentee ballot list subscriptions and processing

The Iowa Secretary of State’s office maintains and administers Iowa’s voter registration database. The office also processed daily absentee ballot list subscriptions for the 2024 General Election. In total, 17 statewide weekly voter list subscriptions, 9 statewide absentee subscriptions, and 9 jurisdiction-specific voter list and absentee subscriptions were processed in FY25. Voter registration lists were updated daily, and monthly totals of Iowa’s registered voters were available publicly via the official Secretary of State website.

Thousands of Iowans register to vote online, securely, in mere minutes

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) and Iowa Secretary of State’s office continued their collaboration to provide online voter registration to eligible Iowa residents. An online application is available to Iowa citizens with an Iowa driver’s license or non-operator ID who want to register to vote or change their registration information online. This system has saved significant time in processing for the State of Iowa.

14,700+ IOWANS REGISTERED TO VOTE UTILIZING OUR ONLINE SYSTEM IN FY25

IN COLLABORATION WITH  IOWA DOT



ELECTION DIVISION

COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

Software analyzes and monitors activity

BallotShield and VoteShield continue to be valuable tools in analyzing and monitoring voter registration and voting activity in the state. VoteShield and BallotShield provided reassurance and documentation to election officials at the state and county levels on election security. By providing early alerts to any suspicious voter registration or absentee balloting activity, officials can quickly investigate anomalies. Local, state, and federal partnerships shore up security at all levels. The Iowa Secretary of State and election security partners remained in continuous contact on election threat monitoring and training and preparedness throughout FY25.

Cybersecurity

County election officials and their local teams received important cybersecurity training and resources throughout the year. Collaborations with Iowa’s Department of Management IT Division (DOM DoIT), the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Iowa’s Fusion Center, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, among others, resulted in key information sharing and election threat intelligence.

Physical Security

The Iowa Secretary of State’s office developed and distributed a first-of-its-kind Law Enforcement Guidebook for Iowa Elections in the summer of 2024 to address a potential gap in election security. When polling place incidents occur, law enforcement officers, especially in rural communities, sometimes arrive without a comprehensive understanding of election-specific laws and procedures. At the same time, election officials often struggle with knowing when to call law enforcement and how to work with them efficiently and effectively.

The Iowa Law Enforcement Guidebook was developed to provide practical and accessible guidance on election laws and procedures that can be referenced in patrol cars or on-site during incidents. The office directly collaborated with law enforcement and election officials, particularly the Iowa Sheriffs’ and Deputies’ Association, soliciting input and feedback from real-world end users. This meant the guidebook would be useful and easy-to-use – something that would work for everyone involved, not just a training manual on a shelf.

The collaboration has strengthened partnerships between election offices and law enforcement and offered opportunities for improved incident response coordination.

Iowa’s election community receives technical and security support, guidance, and collaboration from the following partners:

- Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD)
- Iowa Department of Management IT Division (DOM DoIT)
- Iowa Counties Information Technology (ICIT)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Iowa National Guard, Cyber Division
- Iowa State Association of County Auditors (ISACA)

ELECTIONS DIVISION TRAINING & PREPAREDNESS

Election consistency, security, and integrity require the training of election officials

In FY25, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office significantly increased its focus on training and preparedness for election teams, hosting 36 separate sessions. Through workshops, trainings, and tabletop exercises held both in-person and virtually, election officials across the state received necessary resources to prepare for the 2024 General Election.

Security tabletop exercises and Incident Repose Plan development

The office continued to host the annual tabletop exercises across the six districts designated by the Iowa State Association of County Auditors, with attendance from approximately 200 individuals. Participants included county elections staff, county IT teams, county emergency managers, members of the county board of supervisors, and local law enforcement. During these exercises, county auditors and their local election security teams developed and updated their Incident Response Plans and discussed potential scenarios that could disrupt elections, such as natural disasters, power outages, and cyberattacks.

County auditor training and orientations

Additional training sessions with Iowa’s 99 county auditors remain critical to ongoing election administration and integrity, including reminders of requirements laid out by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) to ensure compliance. The Iowa Secretary of State’s training and development team supported and conducted several in-person and virtual trainings and orientations.



New auditor’s portal provides more accessible guidance and resources

A new online website, dubbed the Auditors Portal, was launched in FY25 to provide county auditors and their teams with streamlined access to important election resources, including election calendars, Iowa Code requirements, candidate and filing officer guidebooks, and legal forms required for election administration. Election officials can now easily access and search the Election Administrator Handbook for guidance on topics such as recounts, vacancies, voter registration, voter list maintenance, ballot management, election day procedures, absentee voting, and more.

SAFE AT HOME DIVISION

ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM
ENSURES IOWANS FEEL SAFE AT HOME



SAFE AT HOME DIVISION

ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM



Address confidentiality program helps Iowans to Feel safe at home

Iowa’s Safe at Home program celebrated its 9th year protecting the address information of survivors of violent crimes such as domestic abuse, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking, and assault. The address confidentiality program has served nearly 3,000 members to date, allowing thousands of Iowans to rebuild their lives and reenter public life without the fear of their private address entering the public record. Safe at Home provides participants with a legal substitute address, which must be accepted by all Iowa agencies, businesses, and organizations under Iowa law. Participants also receive secure mail forwarding, confidential voter registration, and protected absentee by mail voting.

Safe at Home is open to all genders, ethnicities and ages. Participants come from both rural and urban communities. Convictions for domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking impact all 99 Iowa counties. In FY25, Safe at Home saw 316 new participants, for a total of 12,918 participants. The Safe at Home team processed and forwarded more than 30,000 pieces of mail on behalf of participants and 170 absentee ballots were requested by participants in FY25.

Public education ensures Iowans know about their options

The Safe at Home team conducted important public information and education efforts around the Safe at Home program, ensuring existing participants were aware of available resources and encouraging additional participants to enroll. This included mail newsletters, email newsletters, social media posts, and various speaking engagements. Mail newsletters were sent quarterly to Safe at Home participants, and the email newsletter list included 395 subscribers.

Protect our Protectors provides address confidentiality to those who keep our communities safe

As an extension of Iowa’s Safe at Home program, Protect our Protectors offers address confidentiality to Iowa judges, prosecuting attorneys, members of law enforcement, civilians working for law agencies, and spouses and children – both active and retired. Participants also receive secure mail forwarding, confidential voter registration, and protected absentee by mail voting. An additional 77 participants enrolled in Protect our Protectors in FY25, bringing the total number of participants to 326.



SAFE AT HOME DIVISION

IOWA BUSINESSES AGAINST TRAFFICKING

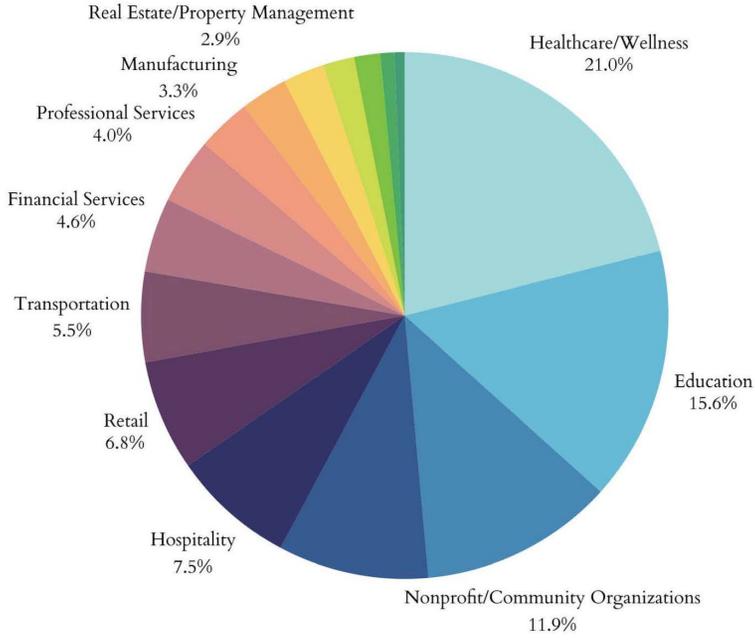
Launched in 2022, Iowa Businesses Against Trafficking (IBAT) is an extension of Iowa’s Safe at Home program, created in response to the number of participants who are survivors of human trafficking. The program was nationally recognized as a finalist for the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) IDEAs award in FY24, and since then, a number of other Secretaries of State have replicated the program in their own states. The program’s mission is simple: to recruit Iowa businesses, organizations, agencies, and associations to become members and to **LEARN SOMETHING** and **DO SOMETHING** to combat human trafficking in their communities every year. Public education and community engagement are the core pillars of the program, and raising awareness of the impacts of this crime within Iowa borders is a key goal and first step to eliminating the crime within Iowa borders.

Community engagement helps raise awareness
 In FY25, events and speaking engagements played a key role in recruiting new members and raising awareness about human trafficking in Iowa. The IBAT and Safe at Home teams presented at various events across the state, including rotary club meetings, chamber of commerce meetings, police department trainings, local events hosted by churches and community centers, and association conferences such as those hosted by the Iowa Board of Certifications, nurse practitioner groups, and more.

Iowa’s anti-trafficking army continues to grow
 Membership to IBAT is free to any organization in Iowa. In FY25, IBAT membership grew to 941, with 85 new members joining the initiative. IBAT members are geographically diverse and hail from 81 of Iowa’s 99 counties.



IOWA INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED BY IBAT MEMBERS



BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION

SERVICE AT THE SPEED OF BUSINESS



BUSINESS SUPPORT AND CREATION

BY THE NUMBERS

3,000,000+

ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS AND FORMS AVAILABLE ON FAST TRACK FILING

33,117

NEW ENTITIES REGISTERED

96.6%

OF BUSINESS FILINGS COMPLETED VIA FAST TRACK FILING

314K+

ACTIVE BUSINESS ENTITIES REGISTERED WITH OUR OFFICE

115,431

UCC FILINGS

649

ORIGINAL NOTICES

305,111

BUSINESS ENTITY FILINGS

4,313

APOSTILLES

17,636

CERTIFICATIONS OF EXISTENCE

12,249

NOTARY COMMISSION RENEWALS

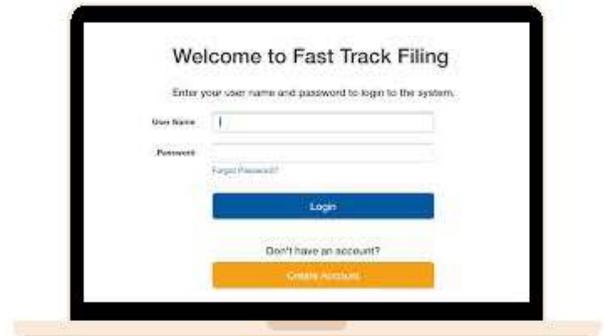
8,651

NEW NOTARY COMMISSIONS

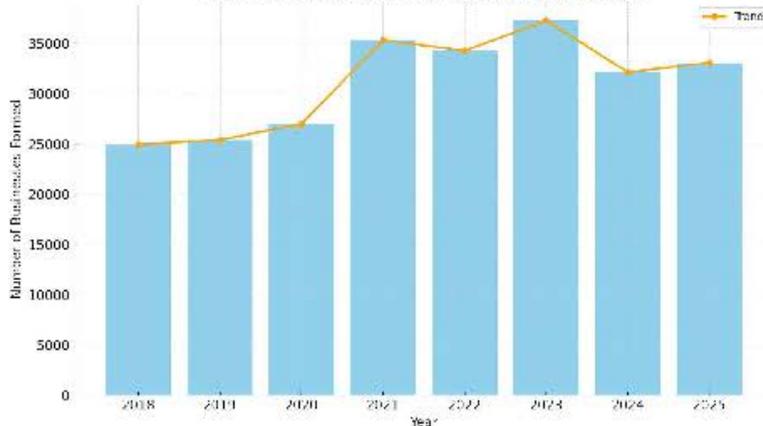
BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Iowa's business portal

The Business Services Division is responsible for registering and authorizing domestic and foreign entities to operate in Iowa, administering the Iowa Mechanic's Notice and Lien Registry, and registering Iowa trademarks. The online business portal, Fast Track Filing, supports 24/7 access, enabling users to conduct business at any time. It offers access to over 3 million filed documents, along with a comprehensive collection of forms, applications, and searchable databases, serving businesses, lending institutions, and the public. Corporate filings include articles of incorporation, certificates of organization, amendments, miscellaneous filings, and statements of registered agent changes. The office also receives and processes trademark filings, UCC filings, 28E filings, and certificates of existence.



Business Formation in Iowa Over the Last Decade



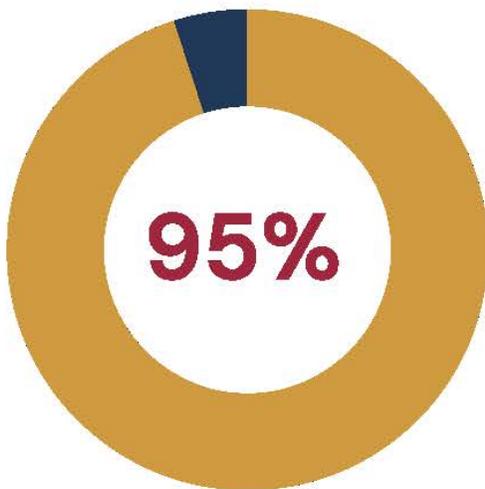
Growing number of businesses formed in Iowa

Over the past decade, Iowa has experienced steady growth in new business formations. In FY25, the Business Services Division registered 33,117 new businesses with the Secretary of State's office – an increase of nearly 1,000 compared to FY24.

BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION

SERVICE AT THE SPEED OF BUSINESS

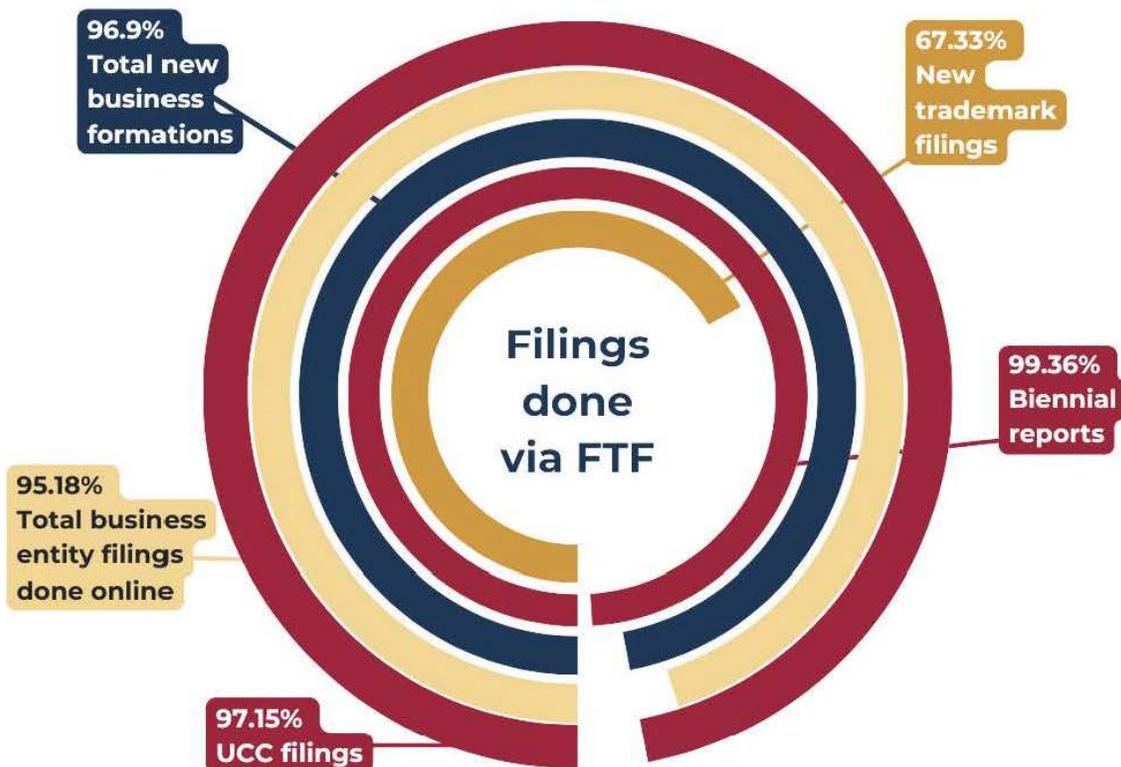
Filings Completed Using Fast Track Filing



Online, 24/7 access to corporate filings thanks to Fast Track Filing

With over 305,000 business entity filings in the database, 95% of which were filed online via Fast Track Filing, ensuring around-the-clock access to resources and filing tools is more important than ever. Under normal conditions, new business filings done through Fast Track Filings are processed within a maximum of two days, some within a few minutes. The system is accessible online 24 hours a day at filings.sos.iowa.gov.

Most entities are also required to file a biennial report with the Secretary of State's office. In FY25, 201,183 biennial reports were filed with the office, 99.36% of which were filed online using Fast Track Filing.



BUSINESS SERVICES DIVISION COMMERCIAL & LEGAL FILINGS

Registering trademarks to protect Iowa businesses

The Secretary of State’s office registers trademarks and service marks for use within Iowa, offering legal recognition and added protection for businesses operating in the state. Registrations of trademarks provide public notice of a mark’s use in commerce and prevent infringement. In FY25, the Secretary of State’s office received 101 new trademark filings, bringing the total number of active trademarks filed with our office to 1,002.



Certificates of existence provide proof of registration and compliance

The Secretary of State’s office issues Certificates of Existence to domestic business entities in good standing, serving as official verification of their legal registration and authorization to operate in Iowa. In FY25, the Business Services Division processed 17,636 of these certificates.

Supporting intergovernmental efficiency with 28E filings

In FY25, there were 4,948 active 28E agreements on file with the Iowa Secretary of State, including 495 new filings, reflecting ongoing collaboration among government entities across the state. These agreements, authorized under Iowa Code Chapter 28E, enable government entities to collaborate by sharing services and responsibilities, fostering more efficient and coordinated public service delivery across jurisdictions.

Filing and Managing Liens Under the Uniform Commercial Code

The Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) is a set of standardized laws that govern commercial business transactions in the United States. It ensures consistency in how business is conducted across all states. In FY25, the Business Services Division received 115,431 total UCC filings, 97.15% of which were submitted via Fast Track Filing.

The Iowa Secretary of State’s office maintains the following, with relevant Iowa Code sections in parentheses:

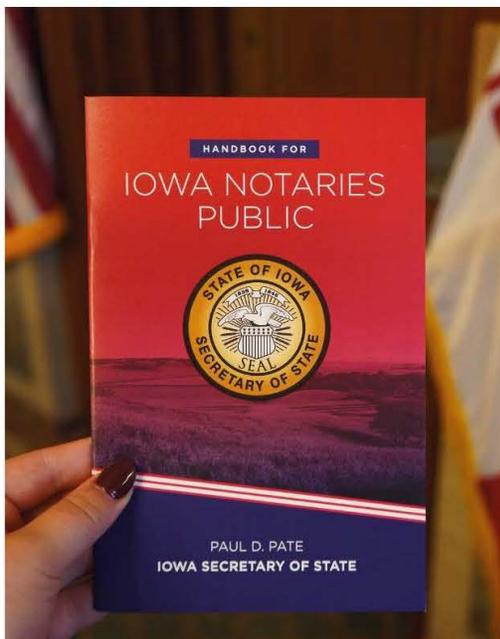
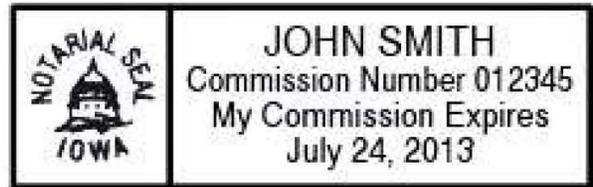
- Agricultural Reports (10B)
- Athlete Agent Registrations (9A)
- Voluntary Annexations (368.7)
- Land Patents (9G)
- Joint Exercise of Governmental Powers Agreements (28E)
- Transient Merchant Registrations (9C)
- Credit Service Organization Registrations (538A)
- Condemnation Filings (6B & 9.2A)

The Business Services Division is responsible for filing and maintaining lien records under Article 9 of the Iowa Uniform Commercial Code. The Secretary of State currently maintains more than 1 million lien records in the UCC database.

BUSINESS SERVICES NOTARIES PUBLIC

Notaries play a critical role in supporting Iowa’s business community

The Business Services Division oversees the commissioning of notaries public in Iowa, ensuring that individuals appointed to this role meet the standards required to serve the public with integrity and impartiality. Notaries verify the identity of individuals involved in the execution of important documents, helping to prevent fraud and ensure trust in legal and financial transactions. Their services are especially vital to Iowa’s legal, business, financial, and real estate sectors, where accurate documentation and authentication are essential. The most common duty of a notary is to witness signatures and affirm that the signer is who they claim to be, reinforcing the integrity of the document being executed.



Thousands of notaries operate in Iowa

The Secretary of State’s Office maintains a database of thousands of active notaries, which most often require renewal at three-year intervals. In FY25, the Secretary of State’s office renewed more than 12,000 notaries and commissioned more than 8,600 new notaries. To date, nearly 60,000 notaries public hold active commissions with the Iowa Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State’s Business Services Division is responsible for issuing apostilles and notary certifications on documents destined for foreign countries that have been notarized by an Iowa notary. In FY25, the Secretary of State’s office issued 4,313 apostilles and processed 649 original notices. These services support the authentication of documents for international use and ensure proper legal notification within the state.

INITIATIVES AND OUTREACH DIVISIONS

COMMUNICATIONS, PROGRAMS, AND
PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS



INITIATIVES CIVIC EDUCATION

BY THE NUMBERS

20,595

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGISTERED TO VOTE TO DATE AS PART OF CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT INITIATIVE

9

RECIPIENTS OF JLYLA

4,737

17- AND 18-YEAR OLDS REGISTERED TO VOTE

40

HIGH SCHOOLS EARNED CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT AWARD

120

HIGH SCHOOLS REGISTERED FOR CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT AWARD PROGRAM

27,966

BALLOTS CAST FOR U.S. PRESIDENT IN THE IYSP

2 NASS MEDALLION RECIPIENTS

163

HIGH SCHOOLS REGISTERED FOR IOWA YOUTH STRAW POLL

75 COUNTIES PARTICIPATED IN IYSP

695

MILITARY PERSONS RECOGNIZED THROUGH HONOR A VETERAN

1 NATIONAL AWARD FOR POLL WORKER RECRUITMENT

60 COUNTIES PARTICIPATED IN CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT

9 PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS IN VETERANS FOR VOTING

INITIATIVES & OUTREACH ONLINE VOTER ENGAGEMENT

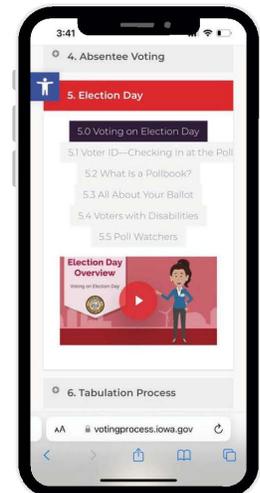
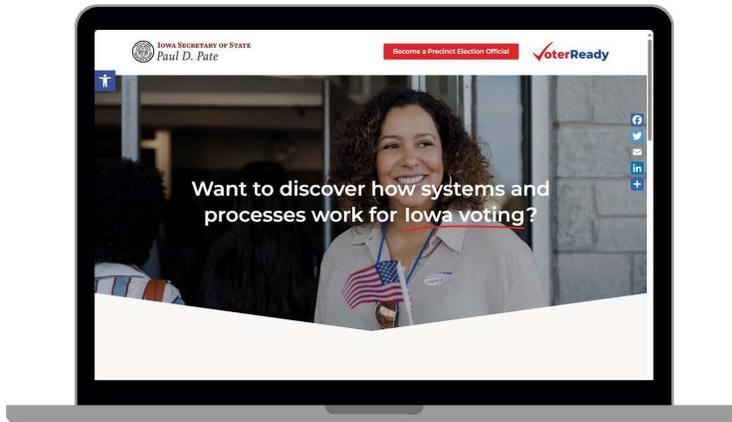
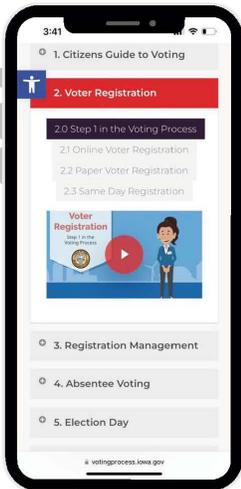


VoterReady supports Iowans making plans to vote

VoterReady is the Iowa Secretary of State’s microbrand to encourage voter participation and distribute important voting information. The cornerstone of this program is the VoterReady microsite.

The Iowa Secretary of State maintains a number of “micro-sites” – smaller, focused websites that exist separately from the official website, designed to meet specific needs of Iowans. One of these sites is voterready.iowa.gov, which is dedicated to voter education and engagement.

Serving as a one-stop resource for Iowans making plans to participate in Iowa elections, the site offers information on registering to vote, finding polling sites, voter ID requirements, and important election deadlines. Users can make plans to vote absentee by mail, absentee in person, or in person on Election Day. Voters who choose to vote absentee by mail can also track the status of their absentee ballot directly through the site. With 2 million registered voters ahead of the General Election, delivering timely, accessible information was a top priority for the Secretary of State’s office, supported in part by the voterready.iowa.gov microsite.



INITIATIVES & OUTREACH POLLWORKER RECRUITMENT

Recruiting a new generation of poll workers

Another important microbrand under the Iowa Secretary of State’s umbrella is the poll worker recruitment campaign. Launched in 2020 to combat a potential poll worker shortage, pollworker.iowa.gov provided Iowans with the opportunity to express interest in serving their communities as poll workers.



Poll workers play a critical role in Iowa’s election integrity – checking in voters, handing out ballots, and ensuring fair and accurate elections across more than 1,600 precincts. As such, maintaining and recruiting new poll workers is an ongoing priority for Secretary Pate and the Iowa Secretary of State’s office. To date, the website has identified more than 21,000 Iowans interested in serving as poll workers.



Iowa’s poll worker recruitment campaign receives national award

In FY24, the office revitalized the poll worker recruitment campaign with a video storytelling campaign to tell the stories of real-life poll workers and their experiences working the polls. Eight poll workers told their stories in FY24. The campaign has become an ongoing project for the office, with additional poll workers featured throughout FY25.

In July 2025, the program received national recognition from the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), receiving the prestigious IDEAs Award. Secretaries of State across the country submit innovative ideas to be lauded as best practices and replicated in other states as part of the IDEAs Award. The winner is voted on by NASS members, Secretaries of State and Lieutenant Governors, and recognized at the Annual NASS Summer Meeting.

INITIATIVES & OUTREACH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Thousands of Iowa youth register to vote through Carrie Chapman Catt Award program

Encouraging voter participation amongst all of Iowa’s eligible voters is a key priority for Secretary Pate and the Iowa Secretary of State’s office. Research shows that youth who receive information on how to register to vote are more likely to possess a lifelong sense of civic duty, so programs that encourage Iowa students to register to vote are vital to supporting voter registration and participation.

The Carrie Chapman Catt Award honors the national suffragist leader and native of Iowa, Carrie Chapman Catt. The program encourages Iowa high schools to host voter registration drives to register their eligible senior students. Participating schools receive resources and tools on how to host registration drives and meet Iowa Code requirements that mandate high schools offer voter registration opportunities to students at least twice per school year (48A.23).

Schools are honored for registering 90%, 70%, and 50% of eligible students:

- 90%: recognized with the prestigious Carrie Chapman Catt Award trophy and award ceremony
- 70%: receive a commemorative banner
- 50%: earn a certificate of recognition
- **Capitol Award:** Iowa high schools with 300 or more students who register at least 100 eligible students



120 HIGH SCHOOLS REGISTERED FOR THE CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT AWARD PROGRAM

60 COUNTIES

4 SCHOOLS RECEIVED CAPITOL AWARD

40 HIGH SCHOOLS EARNED CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT AWARD TROPHY

17 HIGH SCHOOLS REGISTERED 50% / 70% OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

INITIATIVES & OUTREACH VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

Veterans for Voting provides resources to veterans as they cast their votes

In FY25, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office launched a new program, Veterans for Voting. Moving forward, all veteran programs will fall under the umbrella of this new program, including Honor a Veteran. Launched prior to the 2024 General Election, Veterans for Voting connected veterans and their families with the information, tools, and resources necessary to vote safely and fairly.

At the foundation of the program are collaborative partnerships with Iowa’s premier veteran organizations and their members. By providing educational materials on voting processes with Iowa’s veteran organizations, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office can reach a wider net of veterans with critical information



An important facet of this program is public information and education, including through email newsletters, social media, and toolkits. Throughout FY25, six newsletters were distributed to more than 2,500 subscribers, disseminating important election information, honoring Iowa veterans, and providing information on veteran resources and events across the state.

The Iowa Secretary of State’s office developed a toolkit that included important election information on important dates and deadlines, resources to register to vote, and how to vote accessibly. Veterans for Voting partners were formally recognized and celebrated with a ceremony and reception at the Iowa State Capitol in January 2025.

At its launch, the program boasted partnerships from:

- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Tama County Veterans Affairs
- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Iowa Association of County Veteran Services
- American Legion
- Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Midwest Military Outreach
- Clinton County Veterans Affairs

INITIATIVES & OUTREACH

VETERAN ENGAGEMENT

Iowans honor veterans with their votes

Honor a Veteran honors veterans and the sacrifices they have made to protect our country and our right to vote. The program provides an outlet for families and friends to pen personal messages to the military persons in their lives and sends lapel pins with the Honor a Veteran logo. Pins are sent to both the veteran honoree and the individual who honored them, and recipients are encouraged to wear their pins when exercising their fundamental right to vote on Election Day and beyond. The program celebrated its 13th year in FY25 and honored nearly 700 military persons.

Tributes ranged from service men and women who served in World War I to active service members. Tributes are received online and via tribute cards distributed at various events and tabling opportunities, and posted online on the website and social media channels.



The Honor a Veteran program staff participated in several veteran-focused and community events and distributed tribute cards, such as the Iowa State Fair Veterans Parade and sports events, including Iowa Wild Hockey matches and Iowa Barnstormers Indoor Football games. Around 36,000 tribute cards were distributed across the state as part of the Iowa Secretary of State’s ongoing partnership with Hy-Vee’s annual Homefront Veterans Day Breakfast.



INITIATIVES & OUTREACH

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



Elections 101: by Iowa teachers, for Iowa teachers
This innovative resource is designed to educate students on the importance of elections, civic duty, and Iowa's unique role in the political process. This curriculum went under a thorough refresh in FY25 to ensure lesson plans reflect current events and updates in Iowa law and election procedures. The Iowa Secretary of State's office continued its partnership with Iowa teachers to update the curriculum.

Offered free of charge, this customizable program provides teachers with a comprehensive 12-day lesson plan, tailored to accommodate a variety of instructional time frames. Each lesson features three distinct options, ensuring that educators can integrate the content into their classrooms, no matter the time constraints.

The Iowa Youth Straw Poll cultivates civic engagement among the next generation of leaders

Organized by the Iowa Secretary of State's office, the Iowa Youth Straw Poll (IYSP) provides school students of all ages across the state with the opportunity to participate in a nonscientific election. In FY25, students received the opportunity to participate in a mock election for the 2024 General Election.

By empowering students to experience the election process firsthand, this initiative fosters a deeper understanding of the importance of voting, the power of informed decision-making, and the impact that each individual can have on the direction of their community and the nation.

The results of the IYSP are a strong indicator that Iowa youth are highly engaged and educated in the election process, as they typically mirror official election results.

163 PARTICIPATING HIGH SCHOOLS

27K+ BALLOTS CAST FOR U.S. PRESIDENT

75 PARTICIPATING COUNTIES

INITIATIVES & OUTREACH AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

John Lewis Youth Leadership Award

Established in 2021 by the National Association of Secretaries of State, the John Lewis Youth Leadership Award (JLYLA) is named for civil rights activist and congressman, John Lewis. Recipients of the award can be groups or individuals, and must be 25 years or younger, demonstrate a meaningful commitment to civil rights issues and bringing about positive change, and exhibit strong examples of leadership. The Iowa Secretary of State hosted two ceremonies in FY25, honoring two individuals and two groups, respectively.

FY25 recipients included:



Hadley Harvey, a Roosevelt High School student in Des Moines, Chair of the Des Moines Youth Advisory Board, Public Relations Chair for the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council, and a member of her school’s Student Leadership Collective. She is currently a student at Harvard University. Honored in October 2024.



Reem Kirja, a student at Iowa City West High School, Top 10 under 25 Changemaker recipient of multiple human rights awards, Executive Board member of Model United Nations, founder of the West Student Fund. Honored in October 2024.



Elijah Smith and LaTreyal Oliver, students at Waterloo East and Waterloo West High School, recognized for their efforts in ensuring access to transportation for after-school activities for their fellow students, and the only two Iowa participants of the National Youth Leadership Council on Distracted Driving.



Iowa City West High School’s Black Student Union Executive Board (Neema Ash, Alicia Austin, Rawan Babiker, Corte Beal, and Vanessa Shannon), a student-led organization that supports the Black student population at West High School. The Black Student Union regularly hosts open discussions and panel sessions, including events regarding the conditions in Sudan, a Black-owned business fair, and a field trip to the African American Museum in Cedar Rapids.

INITIATIVES & OUTREACH

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

NASS Medallion

The National Association of Secretaries of State Medallion Award honors individuals, groups, and organizations that have a record of promoting elections, civic education, service to state government, and a commitment to giving. In FY25, Secretary Pate honored two individuals with the award.

Wes Hicock, Director of Elections at the Iowa Secretary of State’s office. Wes was a dedicated public servant passionate about election administration and a valued member of the Iowa Secretary of State’s elections team for nearly a decade. Wes was recognized nationally in 2021 with the highest professional honor for election officials, the designation of Certified Elections/Registration Administrator. Wes’s motto, “Elections happen, whether we are ready for them or not,” has continued to inspire the elections team as they continue his efforts to administer secure, accurate, and fair elections for Iowa voters. Honored posthumously in May 2025.



Jack Vanderflucht, dedicated Iowa educator at Dallas Center-Grimes School District. In the classroom, Jack inspires students to engage in the civic process by registering to vote and becoming informed citizens. Beyond his service as an educator, Jack was instrumental in helping the Iowa Secretary of State’s office update and improve the Elections 101 curriculum, which is designed to provide Iowa teachers with the tools needed to educate their students on Iowa elections and civic involvement.



INITIATIVES & OUTREACH

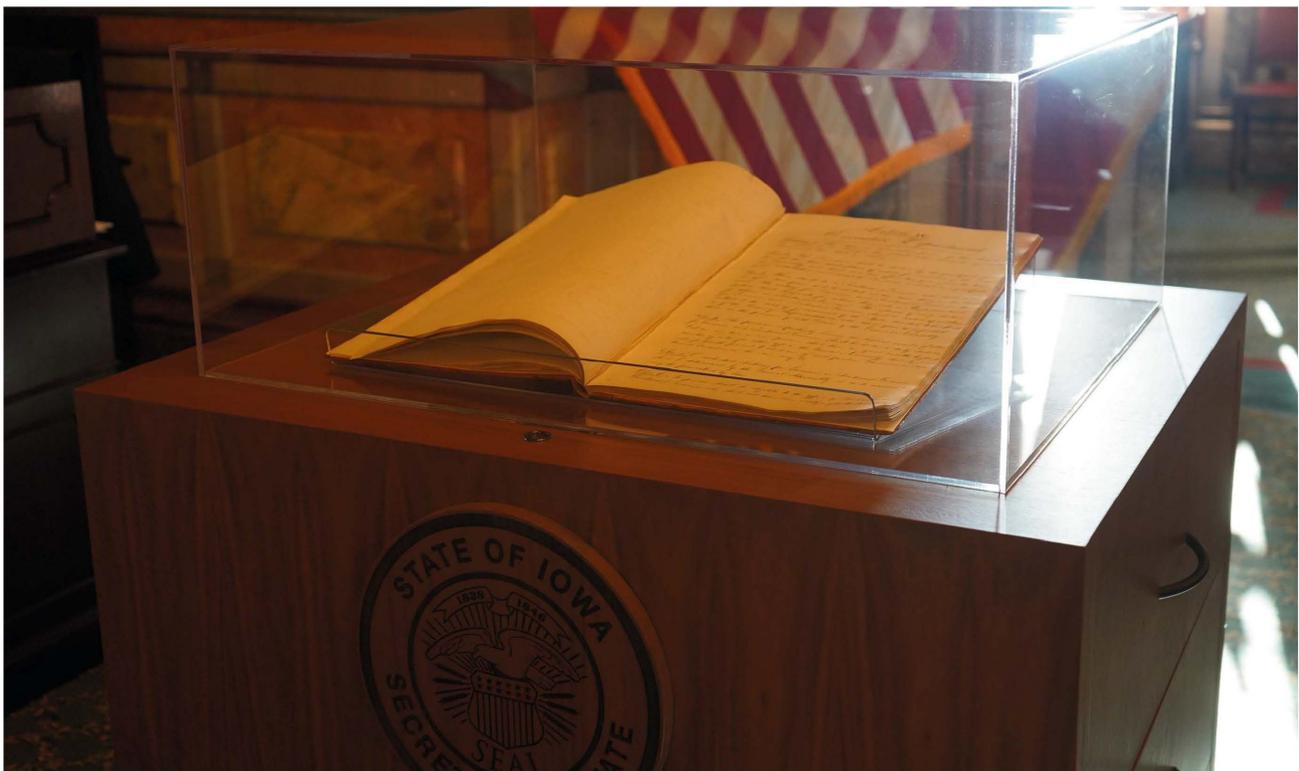
OFFICE UPDATES

New Iowa Constitution display case offers better document protection

The original 1857 Iowa Constitution has been proudly housed in the Iowa Secretary of State's office since its 'rediscovery' in the office's vault in 1947. After undergoing extensive restoration in 1987, it was put on display for the public in the Iowa Secretary of State's office. In FY25, the Iowa Secretary of State invested resources in upgrading the display case to better preserve the historic document and offer enhanced protection. A custom wood case was designed and ordered through a local Iowa vendor – complete with moisture-absorbing canisters, UV-protected display acrylic, and temperature and humidity monitoring.

The new case also includes display drawers, allowing the office to display an additional three documents. Two of the drawers house land record books that denote the transfer of land to President Abraham Lincoln in the 1800s. The third historic document is rotated, enabling staff to share with the public the historic functions of the office and provide more information about voting, business administration, and town incorporation in the state of Iowa.

The 1857 Iowa Constitution is on display in the Iowa Secretary of State's Office, situated on the first floor of the Iowa State Capitol, Room 105, and is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS EARNED MEDIA AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

Effective public communication is fundamental to transparent and responsive public services

During FY25, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office prioritized comprehensive public information campaigns and voter outreach initiatives designed to enhance civic engagement, increase accessibility to critical state services, and support Iowa's business community. Through targeted messaging, strategic media partnerships, and diverse communication channels, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office worked to bridge information gaps, empower Iowa residents with critical knowledge, and provide essential resources for business owners.

Earned media provides third-party credibility and extends key messages.

Strategic media coverage supports reaching broader audiences with objective, compelling narratives that enhance public understanding and engagement. In FY25, a total of 28 press releases were distributed to Iowa newspapers, online outlets, radio, blogs, and broadcast stations on topics including voter education and important election information, details on programs administered by the Iowa Secretary of State, award recognitions, and updates relevant to the business community. One additional guest editorial was distributed and published.

Earned media campaigns across FY25 garnered the following results.



OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

PRESS EVENTS

Press conferences and other events strengthen media relationships and broaden reach

The Iowa Secretary of State’s office hosts and participates in a variety of events that help generate media coverage and strengthen relationships with journalists, including press conferences, award ceremonies, and other announcements.

The office also hosted a workshop for Iowa media focused on best practices for covering elections leading into the 2024 General Election, helping to promote accurate, informed reporting and build trust in the electoral process. These events play a vital role in expanding the office’s reach, building relationships with Iowa media, and reinforcing key messages across the state.



These events included:

- Pre-Election Equipment Testing in Polk County
- Press Conferences on Veterans for Voting in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs
- John Lewis Youth Leadership Award Ceremony (2)
- Election Security Press Conference with Partners
- Certification of 2024 General Election
- Unveiling of New Constitution Case
- High School Voter Registration Day
- Numerous Carrie Chapman Catt Award Ceremonies Across the State



Media Days allow Secretary Pate to meet with outlets in all corners of the state in one day

In order to reach press in all four corners of the state and ensure that journalists had access to interviews with the Iowa Secretary of State, several “media days” are planned, where journalists schedule 15-minute increments of interviews with Secretary Pate and other stakeholders. Interviews are available in person and via video conference call to accommodate publications and outlets outside of the Des Moines metro area. In FY25, six media days were hosted, covering IBAT, Safe at Home, Voter Registration Day, legislative priorities, and more.



OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS OWNED MEDIA

New user-friendly website provides Iowans with streamlined access to information

The Iowa Secretary of State launched an updated website to Iowans at sos.iowa.gov in February 2024, providing streamlined and improved customer experience and access to resources needed to complete required filings with the office. Since its launch in February 2025, the website has seen strong engagement – 209,000 individual visitors used the new site, and those users generated 773,000 total page views.

Newsletters reach thousands of Iowans every month

The Iowa Secretary of State leverages GovDelivery, a service paid for and provided by the State of Iowa’s Department of Management’s IT Division (DOM DoIT). In FY25, the office distributed a total of 36 e-newsletters.

- **The Pate Report** (13 distributed): sent to nearly 260,000 subscribers once a month, sharing office updates from all divisions, with a strong focus on business-related information. Information about upcoming elections, civic holidays, and Iowa Secretary of State programs are also included.
- **Civic Edge** (6 distributed): sent to 1,338 Iowa educators and administrators every other month, with important information about the Iowa Secretary of State’s youth programs, resources on hosting voter registration drives, and civic education and engagement.
- **IBAT newsletter** (6 distributed): sent to 830 subscribers every other month, sharing important information on Iowa’s Safe at Home program, how to join IBAT, and ways to support IBAT’s mission to LEARN SOMETHING and DO SOMETHING about human trafficking.
- **Veterans for Voting**, formerly Honor a Veteran (5 distributed): sent to 2,781 subscribers every other month. The newsletter shares and honors Iowa veteran stories, Iowa veteran organizations, upcoming veteran events, and election information.
- **Pate Report Special Editions** (12 distributed): sent as necessary, to subscribers based on the topic. Special Editions are distributed to educate Iowans on important deadlines, events, or updates, such as invitations to events and webinars hosted by the office, notary information, legal updates, and more.



OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS OWNED MEDIA

Social media channels provide an accessible way to reach thousands of Iowans with important updates

Statistics show that more and more individuals rely on social media for news and updates, meaning that providing timely and accurate information on social media channels is more important than ever. The Iowa Secretary of State maintains a presence on a number of social media channels, including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Youtube. Organic, unpaid outreach on social media channels is the foundation of the office’s social media strategy. In FY25, the office’s channels grew to over 1,500 followers on Meta platforms and 9.7 million total views across all channels. Facebook and Instagram saw 73,400 page visits and 55,700 interactions, while X and LinkedIn earned 273,546 and 72,858 organic views, respectively. Targeted campaigns for initiatives such as Safe at Home and Veterans for Voting reached 4,000+ and 15,000+ views, helping ensure important programs and election information reached Iowans statewide.

Paid ads on social media channels provide a growing reach

The communications team also employed a paid strategy on Facebook and Instagram in FY25 to share important voter information and election deadlines to Iowans. Paid ads garnered nearly 13 million in impressions and 2.6 million in reach.



Recruiting poll workers on behalf of Iowa counties

While Iowa has not faced a widespread poll worker shortage, some counties continue to experience challenges in meeting staffing needs and forming bipartisan poll worker teams. To support these counties, the Iowa Secretary of State’s office funded targeted social media advertising campaigns aimed at recruiting local poll workers. Using voter registration data, the ads were directed specifically at registered voters within the counties needing assistance. In FY25, approximately 10% of the office’s in-house advertising budget was dedicated to poll worker recruitment efforts.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

New user-friendly public website better serves Iowans

The Information Technology Division, in collaboration with a private vendor, developed a brand new website at ssa.iowa.gov. This official government website hosts thousands of forms, a database of thousands of business entities, and important information on registering a business, maintaining compliance with Iowa law, and election-related information.

As part of launching the new public website, the IT team implemented a range of security and infrastructure measures to ensure reliability, accessibility, and data protection. This included secure hosting, firewall and network upgrades, encrypted connections (HTTPS), and multi-factor authentication for administrative access. All servers were also upgraded to maintain performance and security standards.

Technology upgrades improve accessibility, lower processing times

To improve accessibility and streamline internal processes, the IT team implemented several key technology upgrades. The replacement of traditional phones with Microsoft Teams supported enhanced communication and streamlined services. Upgrading PDF software improved document handling and accessibility, while new tools simplified access to account information and payment processing. The office's accounting system was also upgraded to improve financial operations. Additionally, a new Single Certificate Apostille feature was introduced to streamline document authentication services. These improvements reduced manual steps, lowered processing times, and contributed to a more efficient user experience.

Strengthening Online Business Services with Fast Track Filing

With 95% of Iowa's business entity filings submitted on Fast Track Filing's online services for business filings, upgrading and maintaining the online system is a key responsibility of the IT Division. Several enhancements were made through Fast Track Filing to improve security and user access. Data subscribers were transitioned to Fast Track Filing, providing a more secure login experience. Additionally, a secure single sign-on feature was implemented for charge account users, allowing them to access statements and pay balances more efficiently through a centralized platform.



Comprehensive planning protects Iowa's systems

A runbook was developed, tested, and implemented to guide recovery efforts in the event of an unplanned outage in the cloud environment, enabling a smooth transition to a backup region if needed.

 WWW.SOS.IOWA.GOV

 515-281-5108

 SOS@SOS.IOWA.GOV

 First Floor, Lucas Building
321 E. 12th St. Des Moines, IA 50319

